Conference on Disarmament

English

Final record of the one thousand four hundred and sixty-seventh plenary meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 28 August 2018, at 10 a.m.

President: Ms. Beliz Celasin Rende ..... (Turkey)

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The President: Good morning. I call to order the 1476th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Distinguished Ambassadors and delegates, dear colleagues, Madam Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, ladies and gentlemen, in this, the second week of the Turkish presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, I would like to thank you for the support extended to our delegation and for all your constructive remarks since last week.

As you know, last Monday, the first draft of the annual report of the Conference on Disarmament was circulated. Then, we received the first remarks of the member States on the draft at the informal meeting held on Thursday. In addition, during the last plenary meeting, we asked all delegations to submit their written comments on the draft to the secretariat via email before yesterday noon. I would like to thank you all for your very valuable comments and suggestions. The secretariat has already circulated a compilation of the comments received by yesterday which was updated this morning. We will be holding an informal meeting to continue the work on the annual report, based on the comments received, after this plenary meeting.

Last week, we also informed the Conference about our intention to hold a meeting with subsidiary body coordinators. Before briefing you about the informal consultations with the distinguished coordinators of the five subsidiary bodies which I held yesterday afternoon, first, I would like to express a warm welcome to the United Nations Disarmament fellows and to high school students and peace messengers from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who are visiting Geneva today and who are following our plenary meeting.

First and foremost, I would like to thank all coordinators, once again, for the hard work they have put in so far. As of Friday, the subsidiary bodies have concluded their meetings in accordance with the timetable set out in the decision contained in document CD/2126. At the informal consultations, coordinators informed me that the convergence points in their reports far exceed the issues of disagreement. They told me that expectations of reaching an agreement on the reports were very high. Some coordinators had already circulated the updated versions of their reports. On the other hand, some coordinators indicated that they need more time. They underlined that their reports were expected to be circulated before the end of this week. Therefore, although we announced that our intention was to bring all reports to the Conference for adoption this Thursday, we understand that it will not be possible to receive all reports in due time. Under these circumstances, we will try to bring all reports to the Conference for adoption next Tuesday, provided that the report on the progress achieved and agreed on in each subsidiary body is submitted by its coordinator to the Conference on Disarmament, through the President, in accordance with the decision contained in document CD/2119.

Let me now turn to the list of speakers. The following delegations have asked to take the floor: Pakistan and Kazakhstan. I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan, His Excellency, Mr. Farukh Amil, Ambassador.

Mr. Amil (Pakistan): Thank you, Madam President. I would like to begin by congratulating you on assuming the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. You can count on my delegation's full support and cooperation. I would also like to very warmly welcome the United Nations Disarmament fellows I hope you learn a lot from your visit to Geneva — and, of course, the high school students from Japan. Konnichiwa and welcome.

Madam President, we thank you for circulating the first draft of the Conference on Disarmament's annual report right at the start of your presidency last week. The draft is structured in the established format and, notwithstanding the blanks that need to be filled with respect to the reports of the subsidiary bodies, it covers all the requisite details in an objective and factual manner. It is indeed a solid basis for further work. We will continue to engage with you and with all of the member States in a constructive manner for its timely approval by the Conference.

The key to the smooth adoption of the report, which needs agreement by consensus, is to avoid the insertion of subjective political judgments. We all know the divergence of

views that exists on almost all substantive issues considered in this body. If each one of us was to insist on reflecting our respective national positions in the report, it would turn into a protracted and futile drafting exercise, without contributing anything towards overcoming the substantive differences that are preventing progress. Over the years, we have established a stock phrase to reflect our national positions in the report, stating that, and I quote, "all views and positions are duly recorded in the plenary records". This approach has enabled us to always adopt an annual report in the Conference on Disarmament. We sincerely hope that this tradition will continue. We would suggest using this same approach for reflecting stances on other issues that are not related to the Conference on Disarmament's substantive agenda items. Our political views towards fellow member States notwithstanding, we should not question each other's suitability to hold the presidency, which rotates automatically on the basis of alphabetical order in accordance with our rules of procedure. We earnestly hope that a solution can be found that is satisfactory for all concerned parties and that neither damages the working methods of the Conference on Disarmament nor sets a bad precedent.

One significant activity that was held in the Conference this year pertains to the five subsidiary bodies that dealt with all issues on our agenda. My delegation participated actively in all the deliberations held in the subsidiary bodies and made substantive contributions. We found these discussions to be extremely useful and productive. They provided an opportunity to delve deeper into the respective issues and to develop a better understanding of each other's perspectives. Credit goes to each one of the five coordinators for facilitating such a rich and substantive discussion. Let me emphasize here that the reports of the five subsidiary bodies have to be agreed by consensus before they can be presented to the Conference on Disarmament for consideration. Paragraph 5 of the decision contained in document CD/2119 makes that crystal clear. The aim of the subsidiary bodies' reports should be to accurately and faithfully reflect the wide-ranging discussions, whilst respecting the diversity of our respective positions. We have to remain mindful of each delegation's sensitivities, concerns and national security interests.

Let me conclude by reiterating my delegation's continued commitment to engaging constructively in the finalization of the reports of the five subsidiary bodies, as well as the Conference on Disarmament's annual report.

I thank you, Madam President.

The President: I thank the representative of Pakistan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of Kazakhstan, Her Excellency, Ms. Zhanar Aitzhanova.

Ms. Aitzhanova (Kazakhstan): Madam President, as this is the first time our delegation has taken the floor during your presidency, let me congratulate you upon the assumption of this important duty. I would like to assure you of our delegation's full support, in particular in finalizing the Conference on Disarmament's 2018 annual report. The draft report provides us with a good basis for further discussions.

In my brief intervention, let me recall General Assembly resolution 64/35 of 2009, in which 29 August was declared the International Day against Nuclear Tests. This resolution was adopted by consensus, on the initiative of Kazakhstan, to commemorate, under the auspices of the United Nations, the date of our historic decision to close the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site. Our initiative was undertaken in recognition of the efforts of all stakeholders, including civil society, public diplomacy and mass media, to promote awareness of the devastating consequences of nuclear explosions.

Over a period of more than 40 years, approximately 450 nuclear explosions took place in the eastern part of Kazakhstan. On 29 August 1991, President Nazarbayev, by the will of the people, made a historic decision to shut down the Semipalatinsk test site, and Kazakhstan voluntarily renounced the world's fourth biggest nuclear arsenal, which was inherited from the former Soviet Union. In commemoration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, tomorrow, in Astana, the opening of an international conference of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) on the theme "Remembering the past, looking to the future" will take place. The conference will bring together the Group of Eminent Persons and CTBTO Youth Group members, as well as

government representatives and students. In addition, on 6 September, in New York, a high-level plenary meeting dedicated to the International Day against Nuclear Tests will be organized. In this context, we would like to invite you to join us and watch the documentary "Where the Wind Blew", which will be screened today at 5 p.m. in Room XIV, the Kazakh Room. The event is organized together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Geneva Disarmament Platform and the Centre for International Security Policy and with the participation of the director of the film, Mr. André Singer. We hope that the film will serve as a vivid demonstration of the disastrous consequences nuclear weapon tests could have for human health and the environment. We are also grateful to the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Michael Møller, for his support and personal involvement in the event. We look forward to seeing you all there.

The President: I thank the representative of Kazakhstan for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the President. Are there any delegations wishing to take the floor? I conclude that there are none.

As mentioned earlier, we will meet in an informal setting after the conclusion of this formal meeting. This concludes our business for today. We will announce the date of the next plenary in due time. This meeting is adjourned.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.